

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 115

By Terry

A RESOLUTION to congratulate Speaker of the House Beth Harwell on being honored by the Tennessee Federation of Republican Women.

WHEREAS, the members of this General Assembly take great pride in paying tribute to Speaker of the House Beth Harwell on her special commendation by the Tennessee Federation of Republican Women; and

WHEREAS, lauded by that esteemed organization for her remarkable achievements as a Republican woman serving as the first female Speaker of the House of Representatives of Tennessee, Speaker Harwell also rendered sterling service as House Commerce Committee Chair and as the House Republican Caucus Whip during her years in the legislature; and

WHEREAS, Speaker Beth Harwell has been a strong advocate for tougher sexual abuse laws, victims' rights, and children's issues, as she sponsored and won passage of legislation clarifying and toughening the penalties against stalkers, requiring more time behind bars for rapists, strengthening Tennessee's laws for rape of a child, and building a crime prevention cooperation among the States; and

WHEREAS, Speaker Harwell sponsored the "Families First" legislation that enacted Tennessee's current welfare reform program and the "Children's Act for Clean Indoor Air" to keep children safe from the harmful effects of secondhand smoke; and

WHEREAS, Speaker Harwell's impact on Tennessee's education system has been immense, as she has always maintained a legislative focus on innovative education policy; and

WHEREAS, a friend of small business, Speaker Harwell was twice awarded the coveted Guardian of Small Business Award from the National Federation of Independent Business; and

WHEREAS, in addition to her legislative accomplishments, Speaker Beth Harwell served as chair of the Tennessee Republican Party from 2001 to 2004, during which time she was instrumental in Republicans taking control of the State Senate for the first time in 105 years, and contributed greatly to George W. Bush's presidential campaign, serving as a Bush Pioneer; and

WHEREAS, an active part of her community, she is a member of the Tennessee State Museum Foundation, Lipscomb University Advisory Council, Montgomery Bell Academy Board, National Foundation for Women Legislators, Mental Health Association of Middle Tennessee, and National Children's Theatre Board of Trustees, and an alumna of Leadership Nashville; and

WHEREAS, she is a former member of the Board of Directors of Agape, American Heart Association, Exchange Club Family Center, Centennial Medical Center Board of Directors, Senior Citizens Board of Directors, and Middle Tennessee Mental Health Center; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to accolades, Speaker Harwell has received numerous awards, including the Harold Bradley Legislative Leadership Award, American Cancer Society Legislative Leadership Award, 2013 Conservation Legislator Award, Champion for Children Award, and Junior League 2012 Legislator of the Year Award; and

WHEREAS, Speaker Beth Harwell has enjoyed an extensive career in higher education, having served as an Assistant Professor of Political Science at Belmont University and as a faculty member at Lipscomb University and at the University of Tennessee Center for Government Training, and within the State Board of Regents system; and

WHEREAS, Speaker Harwell received her Bachelor of Arts degree from David Lipscomb University, her Master of Science degree from George Peabody College, and her doctorate from Vanderbilt University; and

WHEREAS, her many professional accomplishments aside, Speaker Beth Harwell enjoys the love and support of her husband, Sam, and their three children, Allie, Sam, and Tucker; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that Speaker Beth Harwell be recognized for her commitment to public service and her lasting legacy to the good people of Tennessee; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby congratulate Speaker of the House Beth Harwell on being honored by the Tennessee Federation of Republican Women, and applaud this most fitting tribute to our esteemed leader.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.